

Proclamation 7713—Fire Prevention Week, 2003

October 3, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

More than 1.7 million fires strike American homes, parks, and businesses each year. This devastation costs lives, causes injuries, ruins property, and disrupts businesses. While fires are powerful and destructive, many fires are preventable. During Fire Prevention Week, we join with our Nation's first responders to help prevent fires and ensure the safety of our homes and communities.

As the official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week, the National Fire Protection Association is joining forces with the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency and the United States Fire Administration to emphasize the importance of being prepared to protect ourselves, our families, and our communities. This year's Fire Prevention Week theme is "When Fire Strikes: Get Out! Stay Out!"

Across our country, most fire-related deaths occur where people feel safest—in their own homes. National surveys reveal that most Americans underestimate the risk of fire in their homes and lack an emergency response plan. Fires can grow quickly, and individuals may have as few as 2 minutes to evacuate. Working smoke detectors give people more time to escape fires. At least 94 percent of American homes are equipped with smoke alarms, yet most home fire deaths happen in homes where smoke alarms are not working. By installing and maintaining working smoke alarms on every level of the home, having a fire emergency response plan, and evacuating if the alarm sounds, families and individuals can be ready to respond to a fire.

This week also reminds us of the dangers that brave first responders face as they risk their lives to fight fires and protect our communities, our people, and our natural resources. Our fire services respond to more than 20 million emergency calls a year. Americans are grateful for their courage, skill, and commitment to public safety, and

we honor the sacrifice of those who have been injured or killed in their efforts to protect us. Through fire safety and prevention, we can save lives, including those of our firefighters and other first responders.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 5 through October 11, 2003, as Fire Prevention Week. On Sunday, October 5, 2003, in accordance with Public Law 107-51, flags will be flown at half staff on all Federal office buildings in honor of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service. I urge all Americans to protect their homes by installing smoke detectors where needed and regularly checking their existing smoke detectors. These small efforts will help make our communities safer for all.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 8. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7714—Marriage Protection Week, 2003

October 3, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Marriage is a sacred institution, and its protection is essential to the continued strength of our society. Marriage Protection Week provides an opportunity to focus our efforts on preserving the sanctity of marriage and on building strong and healthy marriages in America.

Marriage is a union between a man and a woman, and my Administration is working

to support the institution of marriage by helping couples build successful marriages and be good parents.

To encourage marriage and promote the well-being of children, I have proposed a healthy marriage initiative to help couples develop the skills and knowledge to form and sustain healthy marriages. Research has shown that, on average, children raised in households headed by married parents fare better than children who grow up in other family structures. Through education and counseling programs, faith-based, community, and government organizations promote healthy marriages and a better quality of life for children. By supporting responsible child-rearing and strong families, my Administration is seeking to ensure that every child can grow up in a safe and loving home.

We are also working to make sure that the Federal Government does not penalize marriage. My tax relief package eliminated the marriage penalty. And as part of the welfare reform package I have proposed, we will do away with the rules that have made it more difficult for married couples to move out of poverty.

We must support the institution of marriage and help parents build stronger families. And we must continue our work to create a compassionate, welcoming society, where all people are treated with dignity and respect.

During Marriage Protection Week, I call on all Americans to join me in expressing support for the institution of marriage with all its benefits to our people, our culture, and our society.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim the week of October 12 through October 18, 2003, as Marriage Protection Week. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate programs, activities, and ceremonies.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and

of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

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Proclamation 7715—German-American Day, 2003

October 3, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

German-American Day celebrates more than 300 years of German immigration to our shores, beginning with the arrival of 13 Mennonite families from Krefeld on October 6, 1683. Seeking a new life of freedom and opportunity, these immigrants settled in Pennsylvania and founded Germantown near the city of Philadelphia. On this day, we recognize the contributions of those German pioneers, and millions of other German-American immigrants and their descendants, to the life and culture of our great Nation.

As one of the largest ethnic groups in the United States, German Americans have greatly influenced our country in the fields of business, government, law, science, athletics, the arts, and many others. Henry Engelhard Steinway and his sons founded Steinway & Sons in 1853. The 300,000th Steinway piano, the “golden grand,” was presented to President Franklin Roosevelt in 1938, and is still on display at the White House. John Augustus Roebling and his son pioneered the development of suspension bridges and wire cable. Their construction of the Brooklyn Bridge is a lasting landmark to their skill, determination, and innovation. And entrepreneurs such as John Davison Rockefeller, John Wanamaker, and Milton Snavely Hershey helped to strengthen the American economy and inspire others to reach for the American Dream.